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EIU Graduates Prepare for Saturday Commencement

Apr-28-2008

Nearly 1,800 students are to graduate from Eastern Illinois University this spring, and most plan to participate in commencement exercises Saturday, May 3.

Ceremonies are set for 9 a.m., noon, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. in Lantz Arena. Guest tickets are required for admission.

Students from the College of Sciences will march in the morning ceremony; the College of Arts and Humanities and the School of Continuing Education (Bachelor of Arts in General Studies program) at noon; the College of Education and Professional Studies at 3 p.m.; and the Lumpkin College of Business and Applied Sciences at 6 p.m.

Graduate students will walk with their respective colleges.

Addressing graduates at all four ceremonies will be **William L. Perry**, president; **Lynne Curry**, Faculty Senate chairwoman; and **Levi Bulgar**, student executive vice president and incoming student body president.

Representing Eastern's Board of Trustees will be **Leo Welch** (9 a.m.), **Roger Kratochvil** (noon), **Robert D. Webb** (3 p.m.), and **Julie I. Nimmons** (6 p.m.).

In addition, each ceremony will feature a speaker who will present the official commencement address:

-- 9 a.m.: **Jerry Griffith**, a 1954 Eastern graduate, returned to his alma mater as a faculty member in 1966. A state and national leader in his field, he played an instrumental role in developing the speech pathology department's graduate program. Later, Griffith established Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center's Department of Psychology, managed its Department of Social Services, and led the expansion of the speech pathology and audiology program. As the founder of Griffith Associates Inc. in Tennessee, his work included launching a speech pathology and audiology program in Alabama's largest health-care system. Griffith now provides consulting services nationally and internationally.

Griffith will also receive an Honorary Doctor of Public Service degree during the ceremony.

-- Noon: **Erin Weed** responded to the murder of her friend Shannon McNamara by founding Girls Fight Back, which teaches women to live safe and empowered lives. Weed, a 1999 EIU graduate, is a professional speaker, author, radio host, violence-prevention advocate and self-defense instructor. She has received significant national media exposure and several awards for her work, including the EIU Young Alumnus of the Year Award in 2003.

-- 3 p.m.: **Al Goldfarb** became president of Western Illinois University in 2002, following 25 years at Illinois State University, where he had served as provost and academic vice president since 1998. He serves as co-chair of Illinois Campus Compact, part of a national coalition of nearly 1,000 college and university presidents; chair of the Mid-Continent Conference Presidents Council; and a member of the Executive Board for The Renaissance Group, a national consortium of colleges and universities.

Goldfarb's son, Jason, recipient of a Distinguished Graduate Student Award, will receive a master's degree during this ceremony.

-- 6 p.m.: **Martha S. Brown**, associate dean in the Lumpkin College of Business & Applied Sciences and professor in the School of Family and Consumer Sciences, will retire in June after 29 years of service at EIU. Brown's duties have included serving as acting chair of both the School of Family and Consumer Sciences and the School of Business, and as acting dean of the Lumpkin College of Business and Applied Sciences. Her volunteer service has benefited organizations including the University Honors Council, Habitat for Humanity, and the EIU Academy of Lifetime Learning Advisory Council.

The Distinguished Faculty Award will be presented to **Robert "Bud" Fischer Jr.**, professor of biological sciences, at the 9 a.m. ceremony. The award is presented annually to a full-time faculty member who has excelled in teaching, professional research/creative activity and service.

Commencement marshals will carry the university mace inscribed with past marshals' names:

- 9 a.m.: **W. Boyd Spencer**, College of Sciences.
- Noon: **Carol D. Stevens**, College of Arts and Humanities.
- 3 p.m.: **Barbara A. Walker**, College of Education and Professional Studies.
- 6 p.m.: **Karla J. Kennedy-Hagan**, Lumpkin College of Business and Applied Sciences.

Faculty marshals are given the honor of carrying the college banner for their respective colleges:

- 9 a.m.: **Melinda A. Mueller**, Graduate School and College of Sciences; **Duane M. Brolin**, College of Sciences.
- Noon: **David Raybin**, Graduate School and College of Arts and Humanities; **Jerry Eisenhower**, College of Arts and Humanities; **Frances L. Murphy**, School of Continuing Education.
- 3 p.m.: **Charles G. Eberly**, Graduate School and College of Education and Professional Studies; **Deborah W. Wolf**, College of Education and Professional Studies.
- 6 p.m.: **Timothy Mills**, Graduate School and Lumpkin College of Business and Applied Sciences; **Samuel A. Guccione**, Lumpkin College of Business and Applied Sciences.